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MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL TAYLOR

SUBJECT: General Norstad's Views

1. General Norstad's Four Major Points.

a. Controlled development of any conflict. The Allies cannot unilaterally control any conflict with the USSR and thus may not be able to enforce a gradual, controlled development of the battle, particularly since it is unlikely the Allies will have the initiative in operations designed to restore access to Berlin. Consequently, the US must be prepared for explosive escalation to general war. (Paras. "2" and 5)

b. Limits on Alternative Courses of Action. The Allies should not overestimate the additional alternatives for use of force provided by meeting force goals previously established by NATO as the minimum required for an effective defense of Europe, with nuclear support when necessary. (Para. "3")

2. Comments on the Four Points.

a. In essence, Norstad's comments are directed at two separate but related points, namely, (1) his ability to implement a "controlled escalation" strategy, and (2) the degradation of his own forces in combat

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b. General Norstad cannot completely separate into entities any Berlin probes and his general war capabilities. Given the consequences involved, he therefore tends to concentrate on his general war posture and to analyze problems in terms of Soviet capabilities to deal with allied military actions over Berlin. Since General Norstad believes we have less ability to influence Soviet responses than we think -- i.e., that it is more difficult to convey discriminate intent in war than in peace, the "fog" or "noise level" being much higher -- he wants any error in planning to be on the side that puts him in the best position to meet the worst possible contingency. Thus, he is less concerned with what the Soviets might do than with what the Soviets can do.

3. General Comments on General Norstad's Views.

a. General Norstad first used these remarks (all except paras. 4 and 5) in commenting on the "Ten Questions" which were discussed at the session with the President on September 18, prior to the latest decisions on military buildup. Hence some of his reasoning -- e.g., that which speaks of defending against "massive conventional attack" by Soviet forces enjoying the initiative (paras. "3c", "5", and "6") -- is not entirely applicable to the concept of a limited ground conventional effort to achieve the limited objective of inducing the Soviets to re-open access to Berlin...

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